

REMARKS

Claims 14-15, 31, 114-115, 116-118, 119-121, 129-131 and 132-135 have been previously canceled by a preliminary amendment dated April 20, 1998. Claims 16-17, 81, 136-145 and 150-151 have been canceled by this amendment. Claims 152-164 have been added by this amendment. As a result, claims 1-13, 18-30, 32-80, 82-113, 122-128, 146-149 and 152-164 are in the application.

1. The claims in the application have been provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of double patenting over claims 1-97 of co-pending application 08/578,210. Actually, as will be seen from the subsequent discussion with respect to the prior art patents cited by the Examiner, a significant number of the features recited in the claims in this application are not disclosed in application 08/578,210 for the same reasons that they are not disclosed in the prior art references. Actually, each of the claims in this application recites features which are not disclosed in co-pending application 08/578,210. This would prevent applicant from presenting in application 08/578,210 claims corresponding to the claims in this application.

The Examiner has indicated that applicant can file a terminal disclaimer to overcome the rejection on the basis of application 08/578,210. Applicant is accordingly filing such a terminal disclaimer with this amendment. Applicant respectfully submits that

this terminal disclaimer should eliminate co-pending application 08/578,210 as a prior art reference.

2. The claims in the application have been provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of double patenting over claims 1-75 of co-pending application 08/696,263. Actually, as will be seen from the subsequent discussion with respect to the prior art patents cited by the Examiner, a significant number of the features recited in the claims in this application are not disclosed in application 08/696,263 for the same reasons that they are not disclosed in the prior art patents. Actually, each of the claims in this application recites features which are not disclosed in co-pending application 08/696,263. This would prevent applicant from presenting in application 08/696,263 claims corresponding to the claims in this application.

The Examiner has indicated that applicant can file a terminal disclaimer to overcome the rejection on the basis of application 08/696,263. Applicant is accordingly filing such a terminal disclaimer with this amendment. Applicant respectfully submits that this terminal disclaimer should eliminate co-pending application 08/696,263 as a prior art reference.

3. The Examiner has objected to the drawings on the ground that they are informal. Applicant will submit formal drawings to the Examiner after the application has been allowed.

4. The Examiner has objected on page 4 of the Office Action dated July 8, 1998, to claims 89, 90, 93, 94, 102 and 103 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. According to the Examiner:

“These claims state cyclic or simultaneous inquiry of the pads. By such claiming, Applicant asserts that either or both of the cyclic or simultaneous inquiry is not critical. By Applicant’s admission these concepts are held to not be critical and are considered as such.”

Applicant does not know of any law or court decision which holds a recitation of an element in a claim to be indefinite merely because there are two (2) different ways of providing the element. Actually, the law is quite clear that such a recitation is definite. For example, claims are constantly being allowed which recite that an element is selected from a group consisting of elements A, B and C.

Applicant is not certain what the Examiner means by the word "critical" in the above quotation. Regardless, applicant does not know of any law which indicates that an element in a claim becomes "non-critical" because there are two (2) different ways of providing the element. This is particularly true when applicant recites the element on a generic basis in a first claim and then recites two (2) different ways of providing the element in successive dependent claims.

5. Claims 6-8, 20-22, 61 and 62 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Yavetz. As now written, claim 6 is allowable over Yavetz because Yavetz does not disclose a plurality of pads each operative to select any of the vehicles in a plurality. As now written, claim 6 is also allowable over Yavetz because Yavetz does not disclose, in the combination recited in claim 6, that a first pad includes an additional switch having first and second states of operation and operative in the first state to provide for an operation of the vehicle only by an individual one of the pads and operative in the second state to provide for an operation of the vehicle by other pads in the plurality in addition to the pad. There is no disclosure in Yavetz of means in the pad for providing a plurality of light indications each for a particular one of the vehicles in the plurality and means in the first pad for providing first light indications for the vehicles in the plurality when such first pad has not provided an address for any of the vehicles in the plurality. No disclosure is further provided in Yavetz of means in the first pad for providing a second

illumination for the individual one of the vehicles when the first pad provides the address for such individual one of the vehicles.

Claim 7 is dependent from claim 6 and is accordingly allowable over Yavetz for the same reasons as claim 6. Claim 7 is additionally allowable over Yavetz because Yavetz does not disclose means responsive in each of the pads to the sequential operations of a switch in the pad for skipping the addressing by the pad of a vehicle in the plurality which has already been addressed by another of the pads in the plurality.

Since claim 8 is dependent from claim 6, it is allowable over Yavetz for the same reasons as claim 6. Claim 8 is further allowable over Yavetz because of the recitation that the first light indications constitute a sequential activation of the light indications in the plurality on a cyclic basis. Claim 8 is additionally allowable over Yavetz because it recites means in the pad for discontinuing the sequential activation of the light indication in the pad and for providing a continuous activation of an individual one of the light indications in the pad when the pad is operated to address the vehicle represented by the individual one of the light indications.

Claim 20 is allowable over Yavetz for certain important reasons. Yavetz does not disclose a first switch in the pads, the first switch having first and second states and operable on a repetitive basis to the second state for a particular number of times to select an

individual one of the vehicles to be addressed by the central station. Yavetz also does not disclose a plurality of light indications in a pad, each of the light indications being associated with a different one of the vehicles in a plurality. There is also no disclosure in Yavetz of means for energizing the light indications in sequence on a cyclic basis before any operations of the first switch in the pad to the second state to select the individual one of the vehicles in the plurality and means for continuously energizing the individual one of the light indications associated with the individual one of the vehicles when the first switch in the pad has been operated to the second state on a repetitive basis for the particular number of time to select the individual one of the vehicles to be addressed by the central station. No disclosure is further made in Yavetz of means for skipping the energizing of the light indications associated with the vehicles addressed by the pads in the plurality other than the pad when the first switch in the pad is operated on the repetitive basis to address the individual one of the vehicles.

Because of its dependency from claim 20, claim 21 is allowable over Yavetz for the same reasons as claim 20. Claim 21 is additionally allowable over Yavetz because it recites means in the pad for providing for the addressing of the individual one of the vehicles by another pad in the plurality in addition to the addressing of the individual one of the vehicles by the pad.

Since claim 22 is dependent from claim 20, it is allowable over Yavetz for the same reasons as claim 20. Claim 22 is additionally allowable over Yavetz because it recites means for sending to the central station a first plurality of binary indications representing the repetitive operation of the first switch in the pad to the second state to provide an address by the central station for the individual ones of the vehicles in the plurality and for sending to the central station a second plurality of binary indications representing the pattern of operation of the additional switches in the pad to the second state to provide the commands by the central station for operating the individual one of the vehicles.

Claim 61 recites second means in the vehicle for determining whether at least a particular percentage of the packets addressed to the vehicle during a particular period of time has the second particular number of the second signals in such packets. There is also a recitation in claim 61 of third means in the vehicle for operating the vehicle in accordance with the second signals in the packets addressed to the vehicle when the second means in the vehicle determines that at least a particular percentage of the packets addressed to the vehicle during the particular period of time has the second particular number of the second signals in the packets. These features are not disclosed in Yavetz. Claim 62 is allowable over Yavetz for the same reasons as claim 61 because it is dependent from claim 61.

6. Claims 147 and 148 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Rosenhagen. Claim 147 is allowable over Rosenhagen because Rosenhagen does not disclose means in a receiver for providing pulse width modulations for energizing the motors in the vehicle to move the vehicle, the pulse width modulations providing progressive increments of time for energizing the motors to accelerate the vehicle. There is also no disclosure in Rosenhagen of means in the receiving means for progressively energizing the motors with the pulse width modulations for the progressive increments of time to accelerate the motors. No disclosure is further provided in Rosenhagen that the vehicles are progressively energized with the pulse width modulations for the progressive increments of time from a zero time in the pulse width modulations to accelerate the motors in the vehicle.

Claim 148 is also allowable over Rosenhagen for certain important reasons. Rosenhagen does not disclose a central station and also does not disclose that the central station is operatively coupled to pads for receiving the addresses and the commands from the pads and for transmitting such addresses and commands to the vehicles in packets each composed of a plurality of binary indications representing the address and the commands for an individual one of the vehicles and each having start bits at the beginning of the packet and having the address and commands following the start bits. There is also no disclosure in Rosenhagen that the packets from the different pads in the plurality follow one another with no time separation between successive ones of the packets. Rosenhagen additionally does

not disclose means in the central station for regulating the rate of transmitting the bits in the packets to the vehicles in accordance with the time between the start bits in the successive packets of the binary information.

7. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 18-19, 28, 29, 33-39, 43-60, 86-97, 100-103, 108-110 and 129-131 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yavetz in view of Stern. In rejecting these claims, the Examiner has stated on page 5 of the Office Action dated July 8, 1998:

“Yavetz discloses a toy set with light indicators on the controllers and transmitters for each controller. He lacks a central station for controller input. This is taught by Stern. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have provided a Yavetz set with a central station, as taught by Stern, in order to save money by only requiring a single transmitter for the set, instead of the many transmitters, one for each controller.”

As the Examiner has admitted, Yavetz does not provide a central station. It is questionable whether Stern provides a central station. This results from the fact that Stern employs a multi-channel FM telemetry oscillator 38. Stern states in column 3, lines 55-59 as follows:

“It will be understood that the control signals emitted from the telemetry network 38 are of selective frequencies tuned to the respective vehicles on the track as will be more fully understood hereafter.”

Since Stern provides a signal with a different frequency for each track, each track may be considered to provide a different transmitter. Each transmitter may be considered to provide a central station. Stern may accordingly be considered to provide a plurality of stations rather than a central station.

However, it is moot whether Stern provides a central station for the different tracks or a plurality of central stations each provided for a different track. The reason is that claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 18-19, 28, 29, 33-39, 43-60, 86-97, 100-103, 108-110 and 129-131 are distinguished over Stern in a number of important respects other than the issue of a central station. Furthermore, these claims are distinguished over Yavetz in the same respects as they are distinguished over Stern. This prevents Yavetz and Stern from being combined to reject the claims.

One significant difference is that, in applicant's system, each pad is capable of addressing any of a plurality of vehicles and of controlling the operation of the addressed vehicle. This is not true in either Yavetz or Stern. In each of Yavetz and Stern, each pad is

able to address and control the operation of only a single vehicle. In order for Yavetz to address an individual one of the vehicles, he has to manually change the address of the vehicle in the pad so that the address of the pad corresponds to the address of the individual one of the vehicles. This involves a manual change in the setting of a number of switches in Yavetz. Stern cannot even make such a change since each control unit 26 is connected by wires to the telemetry network 38 and the telemetry network is connected by wires to each of the vehicles 20. As a result, the telemetry network 38 for each of the control units 26 in Stern is coupled only to the associated one of the control units 26 and only to the associated one of the vehicles 20.

There are other significant differences between applicant's system and each of Yavetz and Stern and these differences appear in applicant's claims. These differences include:

- (a) The telemetry network 38 in Stern does not transmit signals sequentially from the different control units 26 to the vehicles 20. Yavetz also does not provide such a signal transmission;
- (b) The telemetry network 38 in Stern does not interrogate the different control units 26 to determine the operating characteristics of the different control units. Yavetz has a similar deficiency;
- (c) The telemetry network 38 in Stern does not interrogate the different pads (or control units) in a time pattern with the interrogation of other control units to

determine the operating characteristics of the control unit. This is true whether the interrogation of the different pads (or control units) is cyclic or simultaneous. Yavetz is also lacking the same feature;

(d) Stern does not provide for an addressing of each of the vehicles 20 by successive operations of a first control in any one of the control units 26 when the vehicle is released by a control unit previously addressing the vehicle. Actually, Stern does not release any of the vehicles 20 from control at any time by an associated one of the control units 26 since the vehicle 20 and the control unit 26 appear to be permanently coupled. Yavetz is also lacking in such a disclosure;

(e) Stern does not receive from each of the control units 26, on a periodic basis with others of the control units, indications providing for the addressing of any one of the vehicles 20 by such control unit. Yavetz is also deficient in this regard;

(f) Stern does not provide for the addressing of each of the vehicles 20 by any of the control units 26 when the control unit previously addressing the vehicle addresses another one of the vehicles. Yavetz is also lacking in this regard;

(g) Stern does not provide a pairing of each of the control units 26 and the vehicle 20 addressed by the control unit and does not store the pairing of the control unit and the vehicle addressed by the control unit during the time that the vehicle is addressed by the control unit. Yavetz also does not provide such a pairing;

(h) Stern does not eliminate the storage of the pairing of each of the control units 26 and the vehicle 20 addressed by the control unit when the control unit addresses

another one of the vehicles or when the control unit fails to address the vehicle for a particular period of time. This is also true of Yavetz;

(i) Stern does not provide a memory pairing each control unit 26 and an individual one of the vehicles addressed by the control unit. Stern also does not eliminate the pairing when the control unit addresses another one of the vehicles or fails to address the individual one of the vehicles for a particular period of time. This is also true of Yavetz;

(j) Stern does not provide in the telemetry network 38 a memory for storing the addressing of each of the vehicles 20 by one of the control units 26. Yavetz also does not provide such a memory. Yavetz is also lacking in this regard;

(k) Stern does not provide an operable member which performs functions in each of the vehicles other than providing a movement of the vehicle;

(l) Stern does not receive from each of the control units 30, on a periodic basis with the others of the control units, indications providing for the operation of an operable member in any of the vehicles addressed;

(m) Stern does not provide a single switch in each pad for addressing any one of the vehicles, the vehicle addressed by the pad being dependent upon the number of actuations of the switch. Neither does Yavetz;

(n) Since Stern does not have a single switch in each control unit as set forth in the previous paragraph, Stern does not skip, in the operation of a single switch controlling the addressing any individual one of the vehicles, the vehicles already being addressed by

other control units. Yavetz also does not have a single switch which performs such functions;

(o) Stern does not provide in each control unit 30 an illumination identifying the vehicle being addressed by the control unit. Neither does Yavetz. Although Yavetz provides an illumination in a vehicle, Yavetz provides this illumination in the addressed vehicle every time that the LED 112 is activated to indicate a fire command signal from the controller 12. However, this illumination in Yavetz does not identify the vehicle. Furthermore, the illumination occurs only at isolated instants. It would have been desirable in Yavetz to provide a visual illumination identifying the vehicle being addressed at each instant. Since Yavetz failed to do so even though Yavetz provided a light indication, this indicates that it was not obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to provide such a visual indication. This is particularly true since Yavetz may be considered to constitute a person skilled in the art;

(p) Stern does not provide in each vehicle an illumination identifying the vehicle during the time that the vehicle is being addressed by one of the control units. This is also true of Yavetz;

(q) Stern does not provide in each pad a visual indication of the vehicle being addressed by the pad. Yavetz is also lacking in this regard;

(r) Stern does not provide for the addressing of one of the vehicles 20 by more than one of the control units 26. This is also true of Yavetz;

(s) Stern does not provide for the production of special commands in a vehicle when the vehicle is addressed by contradictory commands from more than one of the pads. This is also true in Yavetz;

(t) Stern does not provide for a continuance in the addressing of a vehicle by one pad when another pad simultaneously addressing the vehicle stops addressing the vehicle. Yavetz also does not provide this;

(u) Stern does not disclose a system in which a user can have a pad instantaneously address a particular vehicle by the actuation of a particular switch after the user has had the pad address another vehicle and now wishes to address again the particular vehicle. Yavetz also does not disclose this;

(v) Stern does not disclose a system in which an additional pad is connected to the central station and in which the central station sends to the vehicles the addresses and commands from the pads previously connected in the plurality to the central station and from the additional pad, instantaneously after the connection of the additional pad to the central station, without affecting the interrogation of the pads in the plurality by the central station and in which the additional pad can address any of the vehicles not being addressed by any of the pads in the plurality. There is also no disclosure of this in Yavetz;

(w) Stern does not disclose a system in which a pad is disconnected from the central station and in which the central station sends to the vehicles the addresses and commands from the pads in the plurality other than the disconnected pad, instantaneously after the disconnection of the pad from the central station, without affecting the interrogation

of the other pads by the central station and in which the other pads are able to address the vehicle previously addressed by the disconnected pad after the disconnection of the pad from the central station. Yavetz also does not provide such a disclosure;

(x) Stern does not disclose a system in which the central station provides for the sending to the vehicles from the pads of only the commands which are providing changes in addresses or commands at that instant;

(y) Stern does not disclose a system in which the central station provides packets of signals representing addresses and commands from the packets in the plurality and in which the packets include start signals and in which the addressed vehicles use the time between the start signals in successive packets to co-ordinate the response of the addressed vehicles with the signals in the packets. No disclosure is also provided of this in Yavetz;

(z) Stern does not disclose a system in which the central station simultaneously interrogates the pads in the plurality to obtain the addresses and commands from the pads. This is also lacking in Yavetz;

(aa) There is no disclosure in Stern of a system in which the pads in the plurality simultaneously transmit their addresses and commands to the central station. Yavetz also does not provide such a disclosure;

(ab) There is no disclosure in Stern of a system which employs pulse width modulations at progressive instants of time to obtain progressive increments in the speed of the vehicle at such progressive instants of time from a zero speed to a desired speed. There is also no disclosure of this in Yavetz;

(ac) Stern does not disclose a system which instantaneously applies signals to the right and left wheels of a vehicle, when the right and left wheels are rotating at different speeds because of a turning of the vehicle and the user wishes the wheels to move forwardly, to have the right and left wheels move instantaneously at the higher of the speeds of the right and left wheels. Yavetz also does not disclose this;

(ad) No disclosure is provided in Stern of a system in which the vehicle has the same operation for a particular period of time as the operation of the vehicle upon the last reception of signals from the central station when the vehicle does not receive signals from the central station for the particular period of time;

(ae) Stern does not disclose a system in which an addressed vehicle responds to commands from a central station only when the vehicle has received the same commands from the central station at least a pair of successive times. Yavetz is also lacking this feature;

(af) There is no disclosure in Stern of a system in which a vehicle responds to commands from a central station when the vehicle determines that at least a particular percentage of the packets addressed to the vehicle during a particular time period has a particular number of address signals. Yavetz is also missing this feature;

(ag) No disclosure is provided in Stern of a system in which a vehicle responds to commands from a central station when the vehicle determines that at least a particular percentage of the packets addressed to the vehicle during a particular time period has a particular number of command signals. Yavetz also does not disclose this;

(ah) Stern does not disclose a system which includes a first line, a second line or plurality of lines and a third line or plurality of lines such as recited in claims 63-85. Yavetz also does not provide such a disclosure.

For the record, neither application 08/578,210 nor application 08/696,263 discloses any of the features specified above in paragraphs (n) through (ah). At least one of these features is recited in every one of the claims in this application. Because of this, none of the claims in application 08/578,210 and in application 08/696,263 can present a problem of double patenting with respect to the claims in this application. However, as previously indicated, applicant is filing a terminal disclaimer with respect to each of applications 08/578,210 and 08/896,263 to expedite the prosecution of this application.

Claim 1 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for certain important reasons. Neither reference discloses a plurality of pads each including a plurality of switches having first and second states of operation for providing an address to select any individual one of a plurality of vehicles. Neither reference further discloses a central station responsive to the operation of the switches in each individual one of the pads in the first and second states for sending the address and commands from the individual one of the pads to the individual one of the vehicles. There is also no disclosure in either reference of an additional switch on each individual one of the pads with first and second states of operation, the individual switch in each individual one of the pads providing in the first state

for the operation of the individual one of the vehicles only by such individual one of the pads and providing in the second state for the operation of the individual one of the vehicles by at least another one of the pads in addition to the individual one of the pads. No disclosure is further provided in either of the references of means in the central station for providing for the operation of the vehicle by the individual one of the pads and the at least additional one of the pads when the additional switch in the individual one of the pads is in the second state. Claim 2 is allowable over Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 1 because it is dependent from claim 1.

Claim 4 recites first means responsive in the central station to an operation of first switches in a plurality in an individual one of the pads in a pattern for producing first signals providing an address identifying any individual one of the vehicles. Claim 4 also recites third means responsive in the central station to the operation of a third switch in the plurality in the individual one of the pads for providing for an operation of the individual one of the vehicles by at least a second one of the pads simultaneously with the operation of the individual one of the vehicles by the individual one of the pads. There is also a recitation in claim 4 of fourth means in the central station for sending to the individual one of the vehicles the first signals providing, in the individual one of the pads and the at least second one of the pads, the address identifying the individual one of the vehicles and the second signals providing commands for obtaining the operation of the vehicle in accordance with

the pattern of closure of the second switches in the individual one of the pads and in the at least additional one of the pads.

Since claim 5 is dependent from claim 4, it is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 4. Claim 5 is also allowable over each of Yavetz and Stern because neither reference discloses that the first means is responsive in the central station to the operation of the first switches in the at least second one of the pads in the pattern for producing in the at least second one of the pads signals providing an address identifying the individual one of the vehicles at the same time that the first signals are provided in the individual one of the pads to provide the address identifying the individual one of the vehicles.

Claim 9 recites certain features which are not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern. For example, claim 9 recites means responsive in the vehicle to the identification of the addresses received from the pads as those of the vehicle for executing the received commands from the pads when the received commands from a pair of the pads are complementary. No disclosure is further provided in either of the references of means responsive in the vehicle to the identification of the addresses received from the pair of the pads as those of the vehicle for ignoring the commands received from the pads when the received commands are contradictory.

Claim 10 is dependent from claim 9 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 9. Claim 10 is also allowable over each of Yavetz and Stern because of the recitation of means responsive in the vehicle to the discontinuance of one of the pads in the pair in addressing the vehicle for continuing the response of the vehicle to the addresses and commands from the other one of the pads in the pair.

There is a recitation in claim 18 that each individual one of a plurality of pads includes a plurality of switches having first and second states of operation for providing an address to select any individual one of the vehicles and for providing commands to such individual one of the vehicles for operating such individual one of the vehicles in accordance with such commands. Claim 18 also recites a central station responsive to the operation of the switches in the individual one of the pads in the first state for sending the commands to the individual one of the vehicles addressed by the individual one of the pads. There is also a recitation in claim 18 of first means including a memory in the central station for storing in the memory the identity of the individual one of the vehicles last addressed by the individual one of the pads. A recitation is also made in claim 18 of an additional switch disposed in the central station and having first and second states of operation for providing for the selection again, in the second state of operation of the additional switch, by such individual one of the pads of the individual one of the vehicles stored in the memory for such individual one of the pads after such individual one of the pads has selected one of the vehicles other than the

individual one of the vehicles or after the individual one of the pads has failed to provide a command to the individual one of the vehicles for a particular period of time. These features are not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern.

Claim 19 is dependent from claim 18 and is accordingly allowable over Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 18. Claim 19 is additionally allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because the references do not disclose that each of the pads includes a particular switch having first and second states of operation and operable to the second state on a repetitive basis for a particular number of times to select the individual one of the vehicles. The references also do not disclose second means responsive in the central station to the operation of the additional switch in the individual one of the pads in the second state and to the operation of any one of the further switches in the individual one of the pads to the second state, after such individual one of the pads has selected one of the vehicles other than the individual one of the vehicles or after the individual one of the pads has failed to provide a command to the individual one of the vehicles for a particular period of time, for providing for the addressing of the vehicle again by such individual one of the pads of such individual one of the vehicles.

Claim 28 also recites a central station responsive to the operation of the first switch in each of the pads in the second state for providing an address to any individual one of the vehicles dependent upon the number of such operations of the switch in such pad in

the second state. There is also a recitation in claim 28 of means responsive in the central station to the operation in the second state of the second switches providing in a pair of the pads contradictory commands to the individual one of the vehicles for converting such contradictory commands to signals providing specialized commands different from the commands provided by the operation of the different ones of the second switches in such pads. These features are not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern.

Since claim 29 is dependent from claim 28, it is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 28. Claim 29 is also allowable over each of Yavetz and Stern because it recites means in the central station for providing at each instant only the commands from the pads which are providing changes in addresses or commands at that instant and means in the central station for sending to the vehicles in the plurality the commands provided by the last mentioned means in the central station.

Claim 33 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for certain important reasons. For example, claim 33 recites a plurality of pads each including a first switch having first and second states and operable in the second state to address any individual one of the vehicles dependent upon the number of operations of the first switch in the second state. Claim 33 is also patentably distinguished over Yavetz and Stern in reciting a central station and first means in the central station for interrogating the pads in the plurality to determine the number of operations of the first switch in the second state for

each of the pads. Furthermore, Yavetz and Stern do not disclose second means in the central station for providing, for each of the pads, a first plurality of signals providing an address for any of the vehicles dependent upon the number of operations of the first switch in such pad in the second state. Furthermore, the references do not disclose third means in the central station for providing a plurality of start signals at the particular rate. There is also no disclosure in either Yavetz or Stern of fourth means responsive in each of the vehicles to the start signals at the particular rate for operating upon the first plurality of signals in each of the pads at the particular rate to identify the address individual to such vehicle.

Claim 34 recites sixth means associated in the central station with the second means for providing for the transmittal to the vehicles by the second means at each instant only of the signals representing changes in addresses and commands from the pads at that instant. Neither Yavetz nor Stern discloses such sixth means. This causes claim 34 to be allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern. Claim 34 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because it is dependent from claim 33.

Claim 35 recites that each of the pads includes an additional switch having first and second states of operation and providing in the first state of operation for the addressing by such pad of one of the vehicles not addressed at that time by any of the other pads and providing in the second state of operation for the addressing of one of the vehicles addressed at that time by at least another one of the pads. Since this is not disclosed in either Yavetz or

Stern, claim 35 is allowable over these references because of such recitations. Claim 35 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because it is dependent from claim 33.

Claim 36 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for a number of reasons. One reason is that claim 36 recites a central station and first means operatively coupled in the central station to the pads in the plurality for providing packets of signals identifying for each pad the individual one of the vehicles addressed by such pad. There is also a recitation in claim 36 of second means responsive in each of vehicle to the same identity of the signals providing the commands in two successive packets addressed to such vehicle by the first means in the central station for operating such vehicle in accordance with the pattern of the signals in such packets.

Because of its dependency from claim 36, claim 37 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 36. Claim 37 is also allowable over Yavetz and Stern because it recites means in the central station for interrogating the pads on a cyclic basis to obtain binary indications from each of the pads, on the cyclic basis with the other pads, of the individual one of the vehicles addressed by such pad and the binary indications providing commands for operating the individual one of the vehicles addressed by the pad.

Claim 38 is also dependent from claim 36 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 36. Claim 38 is additionally allowable over Yavetz and Stern because neither reference discloses means in the central station for transmitting at each instant only the binary indications in the pads which are providing changes in addresses or commands at that instant.

In claim 39, there is a recitation of means in the central station for simultaneously interrogating the pads to obtain simultaneous binary indications from the pads of the individual ones of the vehicles addressed by such pads and the binary indications providing the commands for operating the individual ones of the vehicles. This is not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern. Claim 39 is accordingly allowable over Yavetz and Stern because of such recitations. Claim 39 is also allowable over Yavetz and Stern because it is dependent from claim 38.

Claim 43 recites third means responsive in the vehicle to the failure of the vehicle to receive the first and second signals for a particular period of time for maintaining the same operation of the first and second motors in the vehicles for such particular period of time as the operation of the motors upon the last reception by the vehicle of the first and second signals from the central station. This is not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern.

Since claim 44 is dependent from 43, it is allowable over Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 43. Claim 44 is additionally allowable over Yavetz and Stern because it recites fourth means responsive in the vehicle to the first and second signals received by the vehicles from the central station for accelerating the first and second motors in progressive increments to the speeds commanded by the central station to such motors for movement of the vehicle in the longitudinal direction.

Because of its dependency from claim 43, claim 45 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 43. Claim 45 is also allowable over the combination Yavetz and Stern because neither reference discloses fourth means responsive in the vehicle to the first and second signals received by the vehicle from the central station for operating the first and second motors in accordance with such first and second signals only when the first means has received the same first and second signals from the central station a plurality of successive times.

Claim 46 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because of certain recitations in the claim. For example, claim 46 recites that each of the pads provides first binary indications representing an address of any individual one of the vehicles. Claim 46 also recites a central station responsive to the first and second binary indications from the different pads for producing for each of the pads first signals providing an individual address for the individual one of the vehicles addressed by such pad. A recitation is additionally

made in claim 46 of means operative in each of the vehicles for continuing to provide a movement of such vehicle for a particular period of time in accordance with the last commands addressed to such vehicle by the central station when the vehicle fails to receive any commands addressed to such vehicle during the particular period of time. Claim 47 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 46 because it is dependent from claim 46.

Claim 48 recites means responsive in each of the vehicles to the commands addressed to the vehicle relating to movements of the vehicle at a particular speed for accelerating the vehicle in progressive increments to the particular speed. This is not disclosed in Yavetz or Stern. It causes claim 48 to be allowable over the references. Claim 48 is also allowable over the references because it is dependent from claim 46.

Claim 49 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for a number of reasons specified above for claim 46. However, claim 49 recites that each of the pads in a plurality provides first binary indications representing a selection of any individual one of the vehicles. Claim 49 additionally recites a central station responsive to the first and second binary indications from the different pads for producing for each of the pads first signals providing an individual address for any individual one of the vehicles selected by such pad, the pads being connected to the central station. Claim 49 also recites that each of the vehicles includes a pair of left wheels spaced from each other in a longitudinal direction

and a pair of right wheels spaced from each other in a longitudinal direction and including a first motor for moving the left wheels and a second motor for moving the right wheels.

Claim 49 additionally recites second means responsive in each of the vehicles to the second and third signals received by the vehicle from the central station for accelerating the first and second motors in progressive increments to the speeds commanded by the central station to such motors for a movement of such vehicle in a longitudinal direction.

In claim 50 there is a recitation of third means responsive in each of the vehicles to the second and third signals received by such vehicle from the central station for a movement of such vehicle in the longitudinal direction for operating the first and second motors at the same speed, without any progressive increments in speed, when one of the motors in such vehicle has been previously operated at a different speed than the other motor in such vehicle, the same speed constituting the higher of the speeds provided by the first and second motors in such vehicle. This is not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern. Claim 50 is accordingly allowable over Yavetz and Stern because of such recitation and also because it is dependent from claim 49.

Claim 51 is dependent from claim 50, thereby causing claim 51 to be allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 50. Claim 51 is additionally allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because it recites means operative in each of the vehicles for continuing to operate the first and second motors for a

particular period of time in accordance with the last ones of the second and third signals received by the vehicle from the central station when the vehicle fails to receive the second and third signals addressed to the vehicle during such particular period of time.

There are certain recitations in claim 52 which cause the claim to be allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern. For example, claim 52 recites a central station responsive to first and second binary indications from the different pads for producing for each of the pads first signals providing an individual address for any individual one of the vehicles selected by the pad and second signals providing means for moving the vehicles in a particular direction and for operating the vehicle. A recitation is also made in claim 52 of second means responsive in each of the vehicles to the second signals addressed to the vehicles for determining whether successive ones of the second signals addressed to the vehicle are identical. Claim 52 additionally recites third means in each of the vehicles for operating the vehicle in accordance with the second signals addressed to the vehicle when the second means in the vehicle determines that the successive ones of the second signals addressed to the vehicle are identical. These features are not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern.

Claim 53 further defines the third means in each of the vehicles as being operative to operate the vehicle in accordance with the second signals addressed to the vehicle in the second of the successive ones of the second signals addressed to the vehicle when the second

means in such vehicle determines that the successive ones of the second signals addressed to the vehicle are identical. This is not disclosed in Yavetz or Stern, thereby causing claim 53 to be allowable over this combination of references. Claim 53 is also allowable over each of Yavetz and Stern because it is dependent from claim 52.

Claim 54 is also dependent from claim 52 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 52. Claim 54 is additionally allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern in the recitation that the first and second signals for each of the vehicles are in the form of packets each having a first particular number of the first signals and a second particular number of the second signals. There is also a recitation in claim 54 that fourth means determines whether at least a particular percentage of the packets addressed to each of the vehicles during a particular period of time has the first particular number of the first signals and the second particular number of the second signals in such packets. A recitation is additionally made in claim 54 of fifth means for operating each of the vehicles in accordance with the second signals in the packets addressed to the vehicle when the fourth means in the vehicle determines that at least a particular percentage of the packets addressed to the vehicle during the particular period of time has the first particular number of the first signals and the second particular number of the second signals in the packets. These features are not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern. Claim 54 is accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because of such recitations.

In claim 55 there is a recitation of a central station responsive to the first and second binary indications from the different pads for producing for each of the pads first signals providing an individual address for any individual one of the vehicles selected by the pad and second signals providing commands for moving such vehicle in a particular direction and for operating the vehicle. There is also a recitation in claim 55 of third means for operating each of the vehicles in accordance with the second signals in the packets addressed to the vehicle when the second means in each vehicle determines that at least a particular percentage of the packets addressed to the vehicle during the particular period of time has the second particular number of the second signals in the packets.

Since claim 56 is dependent from claim 55, it is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 55. Claim 56 is additionally allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because it recites that the central station is operative to interrogate each of the pads to determine the first and second binary indications from such pads. Claim 56 is further allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because of the recitation of means in the central station for sending to the vehicles at each instant only the binary indications representing changes in the addresses or commands from the pads at that instant.

Claim 57 recites second means in the vehicle for determining whether successive ones of the second signals addressed to the vehicle are identical. There is also a recitation in claim 57 of third means in each of the vehicles for operating the vehicle in accordance with the second signals addressed to the vehicle when the second means in the vehicle determines that the successive ones of the second signals addressed to the vehicle are identical. These features are not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern. This causes claim 57 to be allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern.

Claim 58 is dependent from claim 57 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 57. Claim 58 is further allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because it recites that the third means in each of the vehicles is operative to operate the vehicle in accordance with the second ones of the second signals addressed to the vehicle when the second means in the vehicle determines that the successive ones of the second signals addressed to the vehicle are identical.

Claim 59 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 57 because it is dependent from claim 57. Claim 60 is additionally allowable over the references because it recites sixth means for determining whether at least a particular percentage of the packets addressed to the vehicle during a particular period of time has a second particular number of the second signals in such packets. It is additionally allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because of the recitation of seventh

means for operating the vehicle in accordance with the second signals in the packets addressed to the vehicle when the sixth means in the vehicle determines that at least the particular percentage of the packets addressed to the vehicle during the particular period of time has the second particular number of the second signals in the packets.

In claim 86 there is a recitation of a first line extending between a central station and a pad and having a first voltage at first particular times and having a second voltage at second particular times different from the first particular times. There is also a recitation in claim 86 of a second line extending between the central station and the pad to provide a transfer of information between the central station and the pad. Claim 86 additionally recites first means for interrogating the pad to determine the pattern of the first and second binary indications in the pad when the first line has the first voltage. Claim 86 additionally recites second means operative during the production of the first voltage on the first line for passing the first and second binary indications in the pad to the central station for the transmission by the central station to the vehicles of signals representing such first and second binary indications. A recitation is also made in claim 86 of third means operative during the production of the second voltage on the first line for transmitting to the pad through the second line from the central station signals identifying an individual one of the vehicles addressed by the first binary indications from the pad. These features are not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern.

Because of its dependency from claim 86, claim 87 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 86. Claim 87 is additionally allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because neither reference discloses that there are in the pad a plurality of lights each indicating, when illuminated, an individual one of the vehicles addressed by the pad and that means are responsive to the signals passing through the second line from the central station to the pad during the production of the second voltage on the first line for illuminating the light identifying the individual one of the vehicles addressed by the first binary indications from the pad.

In claim 88 there are a number of recitations which distinguish the claim from the combination of Yavetz and Stern. For example, claim 88 recites that each of the pads is connected to a central station for receiving power from the central station to provide first binary indications in addressing any individual one of the vehicles and second binary indications providing commands for operating the vehicles. Neither Yavetz nor Stern can address any one of the vehicles. Claim 88 also recites first means in the central station for interrogating each of the pads, separately from the interrogations of the other pads, to determine the first and second binary indications from the pad. There is also a recitation in claim 88 of second means in the pads for transmitting the first and second indications from the pads to the central station upon the interrogation of the pads by the central station. A recitation is also made in claim 88 of third means in the central station for transmitting to the vehicles the first and second binary indications determined from each of the pads. An

additional recitation is made in claim 88 that the central station and the pads are constructed to provide for a disconnection of any particular one of the pads from the central station and to provide for an addressing by any one of the pads other than the disconnected pad of the vehicle previously being addressed by the disconnected pad. Claim 88 also recites that the first means is operative to interrogate the other pads, without any interrogation of the particular one of the pads, instantaneously after the disconnection of the particular one of the pads from the central station. Claim 88 additionally recites that the second means in the pads is operative to transmit the first and second binary indications from the other pads in the central station, without any transmission of any indications from the particular one of the pads to the central station, instantaneously after the disconnection of the particular one of the pads from the central station. Claim 88 also recites that the third means in the central station is operative to transmit the first and second binary indications from the other pads to the vehicles, without any transmission by the third means of the binary indications from the particular one of the pads to the vehicles, instantaneously after the disconnection of the particular one of the pads from the central station. There is a further recitation in claim 88 of fourth means responsive in the central station instantaneously to the disconnection of the particular one of the pads from the central station for freeing the vehicle addressed by the particular one of the pads to receive from the central station first binary indications provided by any one of the other pads and representing the address of such vehicle and second binary indications provided by such one of the other pads and representing commands to such vehicle and for freeing the vehicle to be operated in accordance with such second binary

indications. The features specified above in claim 88 are not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern.

Because of its dependency from claim 88, claim 89 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 88. Claim 89 is additionally allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because it recites that the first means is operative to interrogate the pads in the plurality on a cyclic basis before the disconnection of the particular one of the pads from the central station and to interrogate the pads in the plurality, other than the particular one of the pads, on a cyclic basis instantaneously after the disconnection of the particular one of the pads from the central station.

Since claim 90 is dependent from claim 88, it is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 88. Claim 90 is additionally allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because of the recitation that the first means is operative to interrogate the pads in the plurality simultaneously before the disconnection of the particular one of the pads from the central station and to interrogate the pads in the plurality, other than the particular one of the pads, simultaneously and instantaneously after the disconnection of the particular one of the pads from the central station.

Claim 91 is also dependent from claim 88 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 88. Claim 91 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because of the recitations in the claim. For example, claim 91 recites fifth means in each of the pads for providing for an illuminated indication in such pad of the individual one of the vehicles addressed by the pad. Claim 91 additionally recites sixth means in each of the vehicles for providing in such vehicle an illumination indicating the addressing of such vehicle. There is also a recitation in claim 91 of seventh means in the central station for discontinuing the illumination of the vehicle addressed by the particular one of the pads when the particular one of the pads is disconnected from the central station. A recitation is also made in claim 91 of eighth means in the central station for discontinuing the illuminated indication in the particular ones of the pads of the vehicle addressed by the particular one of the pads when the particular one of the pads is disconnected from the central station.

Since claim 96 is dependent from claim 1, it is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 1. Claim 96 is additionally allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because it recites that the pads in the plurality are connected to the central station and that means are provided in the central station for discontinuing the operation of the vehicle by the individual one of the pads instantaneously after the individual one of the pads is disconnected from the central station and for providing for the addressing of the vehicle by any one of the pads still connected to the central station.

Because of its dependency from claim 5, claim 97 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 5. Claim 97 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern in the recitations that the pads in the pluralities are connected to the central station and that means in the central station provide for the operation of the individual one of the vehicles by any of the pads still connected to the central station instantaneously after the individual one of the pads is disconnected from the central station.

Claim 100 includes a number of recitations which cause the claim to be allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern. For example, claim 100 recites that pads in the plurality are connected to a central station and that first means are provided in the central station for interrogating the pads to determine the first and second binary indications from the pads. There is also a recitation in claim 100 of second means in the pads for transmitting the first and second binary indications from the pads to the central station and third means responsive in the central station to the identities of the first binary indications in successive transmissions of the first and second binary indications from each individual one of the pads to the central station for transmitting to the vehicles signals representing the first and second binary indications for such pad. An additional recitation is made in claim 100 of fourth means in the central station for providing a transmittal by the second means at each instant only of the second binary indications from the pads which are providing changes in address or commands at that instant. These features are not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern.

Claim 101 is dependent from claim 100 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 100. Claim 101 also recites that an additional pad is connected to the central station and that fifth means are provided in the central station for providing for an addressing by the additional pad of any of the vehicles not being addressed by the pads in the plurality and for providing for a transmission by the third means of the signals representing the first and second binary indications for the additional pad to the vehicles in the plurality instantaneously after the additional pad is connected to the central station. These features are not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern.

Claim 102 recites that the first means in the central station is operative to interrogate the pads on a cyclic basis to obtain the binary indications from each of the pads, on the cyclic basis with the other pads, of the individual one of the vehicles addressed by the pad and the binary indications for providing commands for operating the individual one of the vehicles. This is not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern. These recitations cause claim 102 to be allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern. Claim 102 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because it is dependent from claim 100.

In claim 103 there is a recitation that the first means in the central station is operative to simultaneously interrogate the pads to obtain simultaneously from the pads the first binary indications providing the addresses for the individual ones of the vehicles and the second binary indications providing the commands for operating the individual ones of

the vehicles. These recitations cause claim 103 to be allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern. Claim 103 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because it is dependent from claim 100.

Claim 108 recites a plurality of pads each operative to provide an address for selecting any individual one of the vehicles. Claim 108 also recites that the pads are connected to a central station and that first means are provided in the central station for interrogating the pads to determine the address and commands provided by the pads. There is also a recitation in claim 108 of second means responsive in the central station to the interrogation provided by the first means in the central station concerning the address and the commands from each pad for receiving the address and the commands from such pad and for transmitting to the vehicles signals representing the address and the commands from such pads. A recitation is also made in claim 108 of third means responsive in the central station to any change in the address or commands from an individual one of the pads for transmitting the address and commands from such pad to the vehicles in the plurality on a priority basis relative to the address and commands from the other pads in the plurality. These recitations cause claim 108 to be allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern.

In claim 109 there is a recitation that the central station discontinues an interrogation of any pad which is disconnected from the central station instantaneously after the pad is disconnected from the central station. Claim 109 additionally recites that the

central station provides for the addressing by any of the pads still connected to the central station of the vehicle previously addressed by the disconnected pad. These recitations are not disclosed in either Yavetz or Stern, thereby causing claim 109 to be allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern. Claim 109 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because it is dependent from claim 108.

Because of its dependency from claim 108, claim 110 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 108. Claim 110 is additionally allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern because of the recitation that the central station transmits the address and commands from the individual one of the pads in the plurality to the vehicles in the plurality only when the central station has completed the transmission to the vehicles in the plurality of the address and commands of the pad whose address and commands the central station has been transmitting at the time that the central station receives the change in the address and the commands from the individual one of the pads in the plurality.

8. Claim 3 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yavetz in view of Stern as applied to claim 2 and further in view of Rosenhagen. Since claim 3 is dependent from claim 2, it is allowable over the combination of Yavetz and Stern for the same reasons as claim 2. Claim 3 is also allowable over Rosenhagen for the same reasons. Claim 3 is additionally allowable over Rosenhagen because Rosenhagen does not

disclose means responsive in the central station to the operation of the additional one of the switches in the individual one of the pads in the second state and to the operation of the first switches in the individual one of the pads and the at least additional one of the pads for providing movements of the individual one of the vehicles in accordance with the operation of the first switches in the individual one of the pads and the additional one of the pads.

There is also no disclosure in either Yavetz or Stern that such means is responsive in the central station to the operation of the second switches in the individual one of the pads and the additional one of the pads for providing operations of the individual one of the vehicles other than the movements of such vehicle in accordance with the operation of the second switches in the individual one of the pads and the additional one of the pads.

The Examiner has indicated as follows on page 6 of the Office Action dated July 8, 1998:

“It would have been obvious to have provided a Yavetz toy with the ability to control any vehicle, as taught by Rosenhagen, in order to make the “conflict” more of a challenge by enabling a player to “capture” one or more of the “enemy” vehicles.”

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner that Rosenhagen has the ability to control any vehicle. Applicant would appreciate it if the Examiner would specify in the next Office Action where in his specification Rosenhagen provides such a disclosure.

9. Claims 11-13, 23-27, 30, 32, 104-107, 138, 139, 141, 150 and 151 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rosenhagen in view of Stern. On page 6 of the Office Action dated July 8, 1998, the Examiner attempts to provide a basis in the following language for the rejection of these claims:

“Rosenhagen lacks the use of central station to reduce transmitters, as is taught by Stern. It would have been obvious to have provided a Rosenhagen set with a central station, as taught by Stern, in order to reduce the number of transmitters required in the set and thereby reduce costs.”

The Examiner has admitted that Rosenhagen does not provide a central station. It is moot whether or not Stern discloses a central station since neither Rosenhagen nor Stern discloses a number of features recited in each of claims 11-13, 23-27, 30, 32, 104-107, 138, 139, 141, 150 and 151. By way of illustration, claim 23 recites a plurality of pads each operative to provide an address for selecting any individual one of the vehicles and a central station, the pads being connected to the central station. There is also a recitation in claim 23

of first means in the central station for interrogating the pads to determine the addresses and the commands provided by the pads. A recitation is also made in claim 23 of second means responsive in the central station to the interrogation provided by the first means in the central station concerning the address and the commands from each pad for sending the address and commands from the pad to the vehicle addressed by the pad to obtain an operation of such vehicle in accordance with such commands. A recitation is further made in claim 23 that the first means in the central station is operative to interrogate any additional pad connected to the central station at the instant that such additional pad is connected to the central station. Claim 23 additionally recites that the second means is responsive in the central station to the interrogation provided by the first means in the central station concerning the address and the commands from the pads in the plurality and from the additional pad for sending signals representing the address and commands from each such pad to the vehicle addressed by such pad, instantaneously after the additional pad is connected to the central station, to obtain an operation of such vehicle in accordance with such commands without affecting the interrogation of the pads in the plurality by the central station. These features are not disclosed in either Rosenhagen or Stern.

Because of its dependency from claim 23, claim 24 is allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern for the same reasons as claim 23. Claim 24 is additionally allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern because it recites third means in a central station for providing for a sending at each instant by the second means of

only the commands from the pads which are providing changes in addresses or commands at that instant.

Claim 25 is dependent from claim 23 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern for the same reasons as claim 23. Claim 25 is further allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern because it recites that the first means is operative to eliminate from interrogation by the central station any one of the pads disconnected in the plurality from the central station and to provide such elimination at the instant that the pad is disconnected from the central station and without affecting the interrogation of the other pads by the central station and to provide for the addressing by any of the pads, other than the disconnected pad, of the vehicle previously addressed by the disconnected pad.

There are certain features which distinguish claim 26 over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern. For example, claim 26 recites a central station and pads connected to the central station and operative to provide an address for selecting any individual one of the vehicles. Claim 26 also recites first means in the central station for interrogating the pads to determine the address and commands provided by the pads. Claim 26 additionally recites second means responsive in the central station to the interrogation provided by the first means in the central station concerning the address and the commands from each pad for sending signals representing the address and the commands from such pad to the vehicle

addressed by such pad to obtain an operation of such vehicle in accordance with such commands. Claim 26 further recites that the first means in the central station is operative to eliminate, from the interrogation, any one of the pads disconnected in the plurality from the central station and to provide such elimination at the instant that the pad is disconnected from the central station and to provide such elimination without affecting the interrogation of the other pads by the central station and to provide for an addressing by any pad, other than the disconnected pad, of the vehicle previously addressed by the disconnected pad. Neither Rosenhagen nor Stern discloses these features.

Claim 27 is dependent from claim 26 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern for the same reasons as claim 26. Claim 27 is additionally allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern because it recites third means in the central station for providing for the transmission at each instant by the second means only of the commands from the pads which are providing changes in addresses or commands at that instant.

Claim 30 is patentable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern for a number of reasons. For example, neither reference discloses a central station responsive to the addresses and commands from the handheld pads for providing for each of the pads a first plurality of signals representing the address of any individual one of the vehicles and a second plurality of signals representing the commands for operating such individual one of

the vehicles, the first and second pluralities of signals provided at the central station for each of the pads occurring at a particular rate selected in a particular range of rates. The claim also recites that the central station also provides a plurality of start signals at the particular rate. There is an additional recitation in claim 30 of means responsive in each of the vehicles to the start signals from the central station for determining the particular rate of occurrence of the start signals and for providing for the response of the first means in the vehicle, at the particular rate of occurrence of the start signals, to the first signals representing the individual address of the vehicle and to the second signals providing commands for the vehicle. These features are not disclosed in either Rosenhagen or Stern.

Claim 32 is dependent from claim 30 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern for the same reasons as claim 30. Claim 32 is additionally allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern because it recites that the central station is operative in a first mode to provide for the addressing of each individual one of the vehicles by only one of the pads in the plurality and is operative in a second mode to provide for the addressing of each individual one of the vehicles by at least two (2) of the pads in the plurality.

Claim 104 recites certain features which cause the claim to be patentable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern. For example, the claim recites third means responsive in the central station to the identification of the addresses received from the pads

as those of the vehicle for providing for an execution of the received commands by the vehicle in accordance with such commands when the identified commands are complementary. There is also a recitation in the claim of fourth means responsive in the central station to the identification of the addresses received from the pads as those of the vehicle for providing for an execution by the vehicle of commands different from the commands provided by the pads when the commands are contradictory. These recitations distinguish the claim over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern.

Because of its dependency from claim 104, claim 105 is allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern for the same reasons as claim 104. Claim 105 is additionally allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern because there is no disclosure in either reference of fifth means responsive in the vehicle to the discontinuance of one of the pads in the plurality in addressing the vehicle for continuing the response of the vehicle to the addresses and commands from the pads still addressing the vehicle.

Claim 106 is dependent from claim 23 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern for the same reasons as claim 23. Claim 106 is additionally allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern because of the recitation that the first means is operative to interrogate the pads in the plurality and the additional pad on a cyclic basis and that the second means is responsive on the cyclic basis to the interrogation provided by the first means of the pads in the plurality and the additional

pad for sending the addresses and commands to the addressed vehicles to obtain an operation of such vehicles in accordance with such commands.

Claim 107 recites that the first means is operative to interrogate the pads in the plurality and the additional pads simultaneously and that the second means is responsive to the simultaneous interrogation provided by the first means of the pads in the plurality and the additional pad for sending the addresses and commands to the addressed vehicles to obtain an operation of such vehicles in accordance with such commands. Claim 107 is also allowable over the combination of Rosenhagen and Stern because it is dependent from allowable claim 23.

10. Claim 40 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mabuchi in view of Stern. Claim 40 is allowable over the combination of Mabuchi and Stern because neither reference discloses third means responsive in the vehicle to the first and second signals received by the vehicle from the central station for operating the first and second motors at the same speed, without any progressive increments in speed, for movement of the vehicle in the longitudinal direction when one of the motors has been previously operated at a different speed than the other motor, the same speed constituting the higher of the speeds provided by the first and second motors.

11. Claim 41 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mabuchi in view of Stern as applied to claim 40 and further in view of Rosenhagen. Claim 41 is allowable over the combination of Mabuchi, Stern and Rosenhagen for the same reasons as claim 40 because it is dependent from claim 40. This is particularly true since Rosenhagen does not disclose the third means specified above as distinguishing claim 40 over the combination of Mabuchi and Stern. Claim 41 is additionally allowable over the combination of Mabuchi, Stern and Rosenhagen because none of the references discloses fourth means responsive in the vehicle to the first and second signals received by the vehicle from the central station for converting the first and second signals to pulse width modulations in progressive periods of time, the pulse width modulations for each of the first and second motors at each instant having duty cycles dependent upon the speed at which such motor is to be operated at that instant. Claim 41 is additionally allowable over the combination of Mabuchi, Stern and Rosenhagen because it recites that the operation of the second and third means at each instant is dependent upon such pulse width modulations at that instant in the duty cycles of the pulse width modulations at that instant.

12. Claim 42 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mabuchi in view of Stern as applied to claim 40 and further in view of Yang. Claim 42 is allowable over the combination of Mabuchi, Stern and Yang because none of the references discloses the third means specified above in claim 40 and because claim 42 is dependent from claim 40. Claim 42 is additionally allowable over the combination of

Mabuchi, Stern and Yang because none of the references discloses, in the combination recited in claim 40, fourth means responsive in the vehicle to the failure of the vehicle to receive the first and second signals for a particular period of time for maintaining the same operation of the first and second motors for such particular period of time as the operation of such motors upon the last reception by the vehicle of the first and second signals from the central station. Contrary to the position of the Examiner, not even Yang discloses the fourth means recited in claim 42.

13. Claims 63-85, 98 and 99 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yavetz in view of Stern and Yang. Claim 63 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for certain important reasons. For example, none of the references discloses a first line extending between a microcontroller in a central station and the pads in the plurality to provide an interrogation by the central station of such pads with respect to the first and second binary indications from the pads. There is also no disclosure in any of the references of a second plurality of lines each extending between the microcontroller and an individual one of the pads for providing clock signals from the central station to the individual one of the pads for controlling the time of the interrogation of the individual one of the pads by the central station. There is additionally no disclosure in any of the references of a plurality of third lines each extending between the microcontroller and an individual one of the pads for providing the first and second binary indications from the individual one of the pads to the central station in response to the interrogation by the

central station to the individual one of the pads. Since none of the references provides these features, they cannot be combined to reject claim 63.

Claim 64 is dependent from claim 63 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for the same reasons as claim 63. Claim 64 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang because none of the references discloses that the lines in the second plurality introduce the clock signals in sequence to the different ones of the pads on a cyclic basis to obtain an interrogation of the pads by the central station when the pads receive the clock signals. None of the references further discloses that the lines in the third plurality provide the first and second binary indications from the pads to the central station when the pads are interrogated by the central station.

Because of its dependency from claim 63, claim 65 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for the same reasons as claim 63. Claim 65 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang because of the recitation that the lines in the second plurality introduce the clock signals simultaneously to the different ones of the pads to obtain a simultaneous interrogation of the different pads by the central station and that the lines in the third plurality provide the first and second binary indications from the pads when the pads are interrogated by the central station.

Claim 66 recites that the clock signals have first and second polarities and that the interrogation of the pads in the plurality by the central station occurs when the clock signals on the lines in the second plurality have a particular one of the first and second polarities. This is not disclosed in any of the cited references. This causes claim 66 to be allowable over the combination of the cited references, particularly in the combination recited in claim 63. Claim 66 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang because it is dependent from claim 63.

Claims 67-70 are allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for reasons corresponding to those discussed above with respect to claims 63-66. For example, none of the references discloses a first line extending between a central station and pads in a plurality to provide an interrogation of such pads by the central station of the first and second binary indications from the pads. There is also no disclosure in any of Yavetz, Stern and Yang of a second plurality of lines each extending between the central station and an individual one of the pads for providing clock signals from the central station to the individual one of the pads for controlling the time of the interrogation of such individual one of the pads by the central station. No disclosure is further provided in any of Yavetz, Stern and Yang of a third plurality of lines each extending between the central station and an individual one of the pads for providing the first and second binary indications from the individual one of the pad to the central station in response to the interrogation by the central station to the individual one of the pads. None of the references further discloses that the

lines in the third plurality also provide binary indications from the central station to each individual one of the pads in the plurality, after the provision of the first and second binary indications from such individual one of the pads to the central station, of the particular one of the vehicles addressed by each individual one of the pads. By way of illustration, these features are recited claim 67.

Claim 68 recites that the lines in the third plurality provide the first and second binary indications from the pads to the central station when the pads are interrogated by the central station. Claim 68 also recites that each of the pads has a plurality of lights each indicating a different one of the vehicles and means for illuminating a particular one of the lights on each of the pads in accordance with the particular one of the vehicles addressed by such pad. Since none of Yavetz, Stern and Yang discloses these features, claim 68 is allowable over this combination of references. Claim 68 is also allowable over this combination of references because it is dependent from claim 67.

Since claim 69 is dependent from claim 67, it is allowable over the references for the same reasons as claim 67. Claim 69 additionally recites that the lines in the second plurality introduce the clock signals simultaneously to the different ones of the pads to obtain a simultaneous interrogation of the different pads by the central station and that the lines in the third plurality provide the first and second binary indications from the pads when the pads are interrogated by the central station. There is also a recitation in claim 69 that

each of the pads has a plurality of lights each indicating a different one of the vehicles and that means are provided for illuminating a particular one of the lights on each of the pads in accordance with the particular one of the vehicles addressed by such pad. These features are not disclosed in any of Yavetz, Stern or Yang.

Claim 70 is dependent from claim 69 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for the same reasons as claim 69. Claim 70 is also allowable over these references because it recites that the clock signals have first and second polarities and that the interrogation of the pads by the central station occurs when the clock signals on the lines in the second plurality have a particular one of the first and second polarities. Claim 70 is also allowable over the references because it recites that the illumination of the particular one of the lights on each of the pads by the indications from the central station to such pad through the lines in the third plurality for such pad in representation of the particular one of the vehicles addressed by such pad occur when the clock signals on the lines in the second plurality have the other one of the first and second polarities.

In claim 71 there is a recitation of features not disclosed in any of Yavetz, Stern or Yang. For example, there is a recitation in claim 71 of a first line extending between the central station and the pads in the plurality to provide an interrogation by the central station of such pads with respect to the first and second binary indications from such pads. Claim

71 additionally recites a plurality of second lines each extending between the central station and an individual one of the pads for providing clock signals from the central station to the individual one of the pads for controlling the time of interrogation of the individual one of the pads by the central station. A recitation is also made in claim 71 of a plurality of third lines each providing an indication from the central station to the individual one of the pads of the vehicle addressed by such individual one of the pads. This combination of features is not disclosed in any of Yavetz, Stern and Yang or in any combination of these references.

Because of its dependency from claim 71, claim 72 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for the same reasons as claim 71. Claim 72 is additionally allowable over this combination of references because it recites that each of the third lines provides the first and second binary indications in an individual one of the pads to the central station in a first polarity of clock signals and each provides an indication from the central station to the individual one of the pads, in the second polarity of the clock signals, of the vehicle addressed by such individual one of the pads.

Claim 73 recites that the second lines introduce the clock signals in sequence to the different ones of the pads on a cyclic basis to obtain an interrogation of the pads by the central station when the pads receive the clock signals. A recitation is also made in claim 73 that the third lines provide in sequence the indications from the central station to the individual one of the pads of the vehicles addressed by such individual ones of the pads

when the pads are interrogated by the central station. These features are not disclosed in any of the references. This causes claim 73 to be allowable over the combination of the cited references. Claim 73 is also allowable over the combination of the cited references because it is dependent from claim 72.

Because of its dependency from claim 71, claim 74 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for the same reasons as claim 71. Claim 74 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang because it recites a plurality of lights in each of the pads, each of the lights providing an indication, when illuminated, of an individual one of the vehicles. Neither Yavetz, Stern or Yang further discloses means for illuminating an individual one of the lights in each of the pads in accordance with the indication from the central station to the pad of the vehicle addressed by the pad.

With respect to any alleged illumination by Yavetz, applicant refers the Examiner to the discussion in paragraph 5 of the Remarks and in subparagraph (o) of paragraph 7 in the Remarks relating to differences between applicant's invention on the one hand and Stern and Yavetz on the other hand. Furthermore, any such illumination by Yavetz is provided in a vehicle and not in a pad controlling the operation of the vehicle.

Since claim 75 is dependent from claim 72, it is allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for the same reasons as claim 72. Claim 75 is also allowable over this combination of references in the recitation that the second lines introduce the clock signals simultaneously to the different ones of the pads to obtain a simultaneous interrogation of the different pads by the central station and that the third lines provide the first and second binary indications simultaneously from the central station to the individual ones of the pads of the vehicles addressed by such individual ones of the pads when the pads are interrogated by the central station.

Much of the recitation in claim 76 corresponds to the recitation in claim 63. However, claim 76 includes an additional recitation that the extension of the third lines between the central station and the pads provides for the de-coupling of any one of the pads from the central station without affecting the provision of the first and second binary indications from the other ones of the pads to the central station. This is not disclosed in any of Yavetz, Stern or Yang.

Claim 77 is dependent from claim 76 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for the same reasons as claim 76. Claim 77 is further allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang because of the recitation that each of the third lines provides an indication from the central station to the individual one of the pads of the vehicle addressed by such individual one of the pads. Claim 77 is also

allowable over the references because it recites that the extension of the third lines between the central station and the pads provides for a de-coupling of any one of the pads from the central station and for an elimination of the indication in the pad of the vehicle addressed by the pad without affecting the provision of the indications from the central station to the other pads of the vehicles addressed by such other ones of the pads and that such extension provides for the addressing of the vehicle by any of the other pads.

Claims 78 and 79 are respectively dependent from claims 76 and 77 and are accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claims 76 and 77. Claims 78 and 79 additionally recite that the extensions of the third lines between the central station and the pads provide for the extensions of additional third lines between additional pads and the central station to provide first and second binary indications from each of such additional pads to the central station in response to interrogations by the central station to the individual ones of such additional pads without affecting the provision of the first and second binary indications from the pads in the plurality to the central station and without affecting the provision of the indications from the central station to the pads in the plurality of the vehicles addressed by such pads in the plurality. Claims 78 and 79 further recite that such binary indications are provided at the instant that such extensions of the additional third lines are provided between the additional pads and the central station. These features are not disclosed in any of the references.

Claims 80 and 81 are allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for a number of the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claims 63-79. In addition, claims 80 and 81 are allowable over this combination of references in the recitation that the extensions of the third lines between the central station and the pads providing for the extensions of additional third lines between the additional pads and the central stations provide first and second binary indications from each of such additional pads to the central station in response to interrogations by the central station to the individual ones of such additional pads without affecting the provision of the first and second binary indications from the pads in the plurality to the central station and without affecting the provision of the indications from the central station to the pads in the plurality of the vehicles addressed by such pads in the plurality to provide such binary indications at the instant that such extensions of the additional third lines are provided between the additional pads and the central station.

Claim 82 provides recitations corresponding to those made in claim 63 and accordingly is allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for substantially the same reasons as claim 63. However, claim 82 relates to only a single pad rather than to a plurality of pads as in claim 63. Furthermore, claim 82 recites first means for storing the first and second binary indications in the pad and second means associated with the second and third lines for providing a transfer of the binary indications in the first means to the third line in synchronism with the clock signals on the second line when an interrogation of such

pad is provided on the first line. Claim 82 is accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for substantially the same reasons as claim 63 and is further allowable over this combination of references because of the recitation of the first and second means.

Claim 83 additionally recites that the first means stores the first and second binary indications in the pad in a parallel form and the second means transfers the binary indications in the first means to the third line in a serial form. This is not disclosed in any of Yavetz, Stern or Yang, thereby causing claim 83 to be allowable over this combination of references. Claim 83 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for the same reasons as claim 82 because it is dependent from claim 82.

Claim 84 recites that the first line provides a first voltage to provide an interrogation of the first and second binary indications in the pad in synchronism with the clock signals on the second line and that the central station provides through the first line to the pad signals identifying the vehicle selected by the pad. There is also a recitation in claim 84 that the central station provides such identifying signals to the pad in synchronism with the clock signals on the second line during the time that a second voltage different from the first voltage is produced on the first line. None of Yavetz, Stern and Yang discloses this relationship. This causes claim 84 to be allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern

and Yang. Claim 84 is also allowable over this combination of references because it is dependent from claim 82.

Because of its dependency from claim 84, claim 85 is allowable over the references for the same reasons as claim 84. Claim 85 is also allowable over the combination of references because of the recitation that the pad provides a plurality of lights each indicating, when illuminated, the addressing of such vehicle by the pad and that means are provided for illuminating a particular one of the lights in accordance with the signals passing through the third line from the central station to the pad.

Since claim 98 is dependent from claim 66, it is allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for the same reasons as claim 66. Claim 98 is also allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang because of the recitation that the central station provides indications, through the third line for each of the pads, to such pad of the individual one of the vehicles addressed by the pad. Claim 98 is additionally allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang in the recitation that means are provided in each of the pads for indicating the individual one of the vehicles addressed by such pad in accordance with the indications provided by the central station to such pad through the third line for such pad.

Claim 99 provides recitations similar to the recitations in claim 98. This causes claim 99 to be allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Yang for the same reasons as claim 98. Claim 99 is further allowable over this combination of references for the same reasons as claim 75 because it is dependent from claim 75.

14. Claims 122-128, 148 and 149 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yavetz in view of Stern and Rosenhagen. Claim 122 is allowable over this combination of references for certain important reasons. For example, none of the references discloses a plurality of pads each operative to provide an address for selecting any individual one of the vehicles. None of the references further discloses first means in a central station for interrogating the pads connected to the central station to determine the address and the commands provided by such pads. There is also no disclosure in any of the references of second means responsive in the pads to the interrogation by the central station for transmitting the address and the commands from the pads to the central station. No disclosure is further provided in any of the references of third means in the central station for receiving the addresses and the commands transmitted by the pads to the central station and fourth means in the central station for transmitting to the vehicles in the plurality only the address and commands transmitted from each pad to the central station that are different from the immediately preceding address or commands transmitted by such pad to the central station.

Since 123 is dependent from claim 122, it is allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Rosenhagen for the same reasons as claim 122. Claim 123 is also allowable over this combination of references because it recites that the first means in the central station is operative to interrogate the pads simultaneously and that the pads are operative to transmit the addresses and the commands from the pads to the central station when interrogated.

Claim 124 is allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Rosenhagen for a number of important reasons. One reason is that none of the references discloses a plurality of pads each operative to provide an address for selecting any individual one of the vehicles and a central station. None of the references further discloses a plurality of first switches each included in an individual one of the pads and having first and second states of operation and operative in the first state a successive number of times to address any individual one of the vehicles. There is also no disclosure in any of Yavetz, Stern and Rosenhagen that each of the pads includes a plurality of lights each indicating an individual one of the vehicles when illuminated. There is also no disclosure in any of Yavetz, Stern and Rosenhagen of first means in the central station for remembering at each instant the individual ones of the vehicles being addressed by the pads at that instant and a plurality of second switches each having first and second operative relationships and each disposed in an individual one of the pads and each operative in the first relationship to provide for the addressing of only one of the vehicles by such individual one of the pads and operative in

the second relationship to provide for the addressing by any other one of the pads of the vehicle simultaneously being addressed by such individual one of the pads. No disclosure is further provided in any of the references of second means responsive in each of the pads to the operation of the first means in the central station and to the operation of the second switch in each pad in the first relationship for skipping over the lights representing in each pad the vehicle as being addressed by the other pads when the first switch in such pad receives successive actuations to the first state of operation. None of the references additionally discloses third means responsive in the other one of the pads to the operation in the first means in the central station and to the operation of the second switch in the individual one of the pads in the second relationship for including, in the sequence of lights in such other one of the pads, the light in the vehicle addressed by such individual one of the pads in the second state of operation of the second switch in such individual one of the pads even when such vehicle is simultaneously being addressed by another one of the pads.

Claim 125 is dependent from claim 124 and is accordingly allowable over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Rosenhagen for the same reasons as claim 124. Claim 125 is additionally allowable over this combination of references because of the recitation of means in the central station for transmitting the address and commands from the individual one of the pads and the other one of the pads to the vehicle addressed by such individual one of the pads when the second switch in the individual one of the pads is in the second state of operation.

Claim 126 includes a number of recitations which distinguish patentably over the combination of Yavetz, Stern and Rosenhagen. For example, claim 126 recites a plurality of pads each operative to provide an address for selecting any individual one of the vehicles and to provide commands to such individual one of the vehicles for operating such individual one of the vehicles in accordance with such commands. Claim 126 also recites that each individual one of the vehicles has a light for illumination when such vehicle is addressed and commanded by the central station as a result of the address and commands from an individual one of the pads. Claim 126 additionally recites first means in the central station for storing the addressing by each individual one of the pads of the individual one of the vehicles and second means in the central station for communicating a command to the individual one of the vehicles to extinguish the light in such vehicle instantaneously after the individual one of the pads providing the address and the commands to such individual one of the vehicles becomes disconnected from the central station. Claim 126 additionally recites third means in each individual one of the vehicles for extinguishing the light in such individual one of the vehicles in accordance with the communication from the central station. These features are not disclosed in any of Yavetz, Stern and Rosenhagen.

Claim 127 recites fourth means in the central station for eliminating the storage of the addressing by each individual one of the pads of the individual one of the vehicles instantaneously after such individual one of the pads becomes disconnected from the central station. This is not disclosed in any of Yavetz, Stern or Rosenhagen. This causes claim 127

to be allowable over the cited prior art. Claim 127 is also allowable over the cited prior art because it is dependent from claim 126.

Because of its dependency from claim 127, claim 128 is allowable over the cited references for the same reasons as claim 127. Claim 128 is additionally allowable over the cited references because it recites fifth means in the central station for interrogating the pads connected to the central station to determine the address and the commands from such pad to the vehicles and sixth means for receiving in the vehicles from the central station the address and the commands provided by each of the pads upon the interrogation of such pad by the central station. There is also a recitation in claim 128 of seventh means in the central station for eliminating one of the pads from the interrogation by the central station, instantaneously after the pad becomes disconnected from the central station, without affecting the interrogation of the other pads by the central station and for providing for the addressing by any of the other pads of the vehicle previously addressed by the disconnected pad.

Claim 148 recites a plurality of pads each operative to provide addresses individual to any one of the vehicles in a plurality. Claim 148 also recites a central station operatively coupled to the pads for receiving the addresses and the commands from the pads and for transmitting such addresses and commands to the vehicles in packets each composed of a plurality of binary indications representing the address and the commands for any individual one of the vehicles and each having start bits at the beginning of the packet and

having the address and commands following the start bits, the packets from the different pads in the plurality following one another with no time separation between successive ones of the packets. There is also a recitation in claim 148 of means in the central station for transmitting the packets of the binary indications to the vehicles. A recitation is also provided in claim 148 of means in the central station for regulating the rate of transmitting the bits in the packets to the vehicles in accordance with the time between the start bits in the successive packets of the binary information. These features are not disclosed in any of Yavetz, Stern or Rosenhagen, thereby causing claim 148 to be allowable over this combination of references. Claim 149 is allowable over the combination of references for the same reasons as claim 148 because it is dependent from claim 148.

15. Claims 152-164 have been added by this amendment. Claims 155-158 recite a system in which a member is actuatable a sequential number of times in an individual one of the pads in a plurality to address any one of a plurality of vehicles dependent upon the number of such actuations and in which the binary indications of vehicles already being addressed by other pads then the individual one of the pads are skipped in the individual one of such pads during such sequential activations of the member. Claims 156 and 158 additionally recite that there are in each pad a plurality of light illuminating members each one for a different one of the vehicles and that the light illuminating members indicating the vehicles already being addressed by the others of the pads are skipped when the member in

the pad is actuated the sequential number of times. These features are not disclosed in any of the references cited by the Examiner.

Claims 159-164 recite a system in which a plurality of pads are provided with an address to select any individual one of the vehicles in a plurality and in which the pads are interrogated simultaneously by a central station. Claims 159-164 additionally recite that the pads transmit to the central station binary indications of the states of operation of members operable in the pads to indicate addresses and commands to the vehicles. Claims 160 and 163 additionally recite that the pads simultaneously transmit to the central station the binary indications of the address and commands from the pads to the vehicles. There is a recitation in claims 161 and 164 that the central station sequentially transmits to the vehicles in the plurality signals representing the binary indications from the different ones of the pads. None of the references discloses these features.

16. In order for different prior art references to be combined, to reject a claim, the references have to disclose or suggest the combination recited in the claim. ACS Hospital Systems, Inc. v. Montefiore Hospital, 1732 F.2d 1572, 1577, 221 USPQ 929, 933 (Fed. Cir. 1984). As the Federal Circuit indicated in the ACS case:

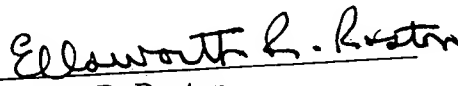
Serial No. 08/797,188

"Obviousness cannot be established by combining the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention, absent some teaching or suggestion supporting the combination. Under Section 103, teachings of references can be combined only if there is some suggestion or incentive to do so."

None of the references cited by the Examiner to reject the claims discloses or suggests the combinations recited in the claims. Actually, each of the claims as now written recites elements which are not disclosed in any of the prior art references cited against the claims. The references accordingly cannot be combined to reject the claims.

17. Reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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